

ISSUE 06

AGRIVIEW

JULY / AUGUST 2007

VOLUME 3



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Minister's Message



Premier Calvert recently unveiled an \$80-million strategy to assist producers and communities in the construction and expansion of biofuels facilities.

The Saskatchewan Biofuels Investment Opportunity Program—or SaskBIO—is a four-year program that will provide loans of up to \$10 million per biofuels facility. A

further \$2 million has been set aside for biofuel and bio-product research and development.

Saskatchewan was the first province in Canada to mandate the use of ethanol-blended gasoline, and right from the beginning, we have been a vocal advocate for the development of a national renewable fuels standard and policy for Canada. The biofuels industry presents a tremendous opportunity for Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan farmers.

We developed SaskBIO to ensure that opportunity is fully realized. We want people and communities to fully benefit from this emerging industry through ownership of the facilities, unlike the oil industry, which realizes massive profits for relatively few shareholders.

The government is committed to making Saskatchewan an attractive jurisdiction in which to build a sustainable biofuels industry. I invite corporations, co-operatives, individuals and

groups of individuals to look into the program to see if they are eligible for funding. Successful applicants must have at least five per cent farmer/community investment and a minimum capacity of 2 million litres per year. Both new and expanding operations are eligible for the program.

Biofuels will create jobs and other economic spin-offs for rural Saskatchewan. It will create new markets for our crops and crop waste. It will increase economic activity and decrease the negative impact on our environment; and it will stimulate new opportunities for our growing scientific research community.

Oil is sometimes referred to as "black gold." Perhaps in the very near future, biofuels will be known as "green gold," and Saskatchewan will rival Houston and Calgary as a centre of the 21st century fuel industry.

Sincerely,

Mark Wartman
Minister, Agriculture and Food

Grazing tour focuses on youth and the next generation of ranchers



By Naomi Paley
Livestock Development Specialist
SAF

The Pheasant Hills Grazing Tour is taking place on July 4 and 5, at the Stockholm Skating Rink in Stockholm, SK.

The focus of this year's event is to involve younger people in ranching, as well as provide valuable information to those already established in the cattle industry.

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) Livestock Development Specialist Naomi Paley says organizers wanted to

particularly focus on getting the younger generations involved in the event.

"The average age of our farmers is now over 50 years old, and wanting to make sure that agriculture is a viable and desirable career option for their children is something that we often hear from the current generation of farmers and ranchers. So we wanted to make that a special focus of this year's grazing tour," Paley said.

"We've even built some sessions into the program that focus specifically on strategies for assisting young producers to get established in ranching, or setting them up to take over an existing operation from their parents."

A number of practical aspects of cattle production and grazing will be discussed over the two days through presentations and tours, including alfalfa and forage rotations, grass establishment, bale grazing, grain to grass transition, winter feeding options, and watering cattle

through deep and shallow buried pipelines. Concurrent workshops will also be held in areas such as fencing, working with stock dogs, intensive grazing management, forages and soil health, cattle marketing, and investors working with youth.

Consistent with the tour's theme, "Bringing Youth into Ranching," the two-day event is free to youth 18 years of age and under. The adult registration fee is \$30 for a single day or \$40 for both days, which includes the full program and meals. Registrations are being handled through the Yellowhead Regional Economic Development Authority (REDA). Please register early, as space is limited.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Naomi Paley, Livestock Development Branch, SAF, 306-786-1686; or
- Stuart Cairns, Ducks Unlimited Canada, 306-782-2108; or
- Michelle Andrews, Yellowhead REDA, 306-743-5176.

STORY SNAPSHOTS



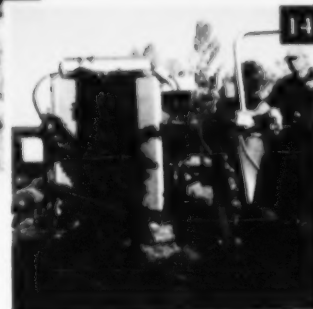
New form of stem rust spreading



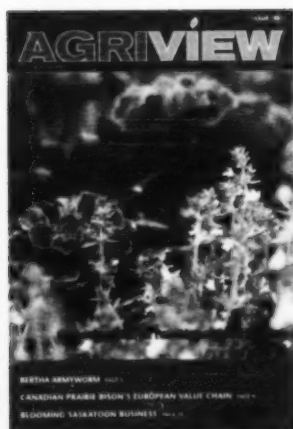
Pulse crops: protect your investment at harvest time



Canadian Prairie Bison's European value chain



Blooming Saskatoon business!



Lemon Thyme and Marigolds at a local greenhouse

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**Saskatchewan
Agriculture
and Food**

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Preharvest weed control



By Dale Risula, P. Ag
Integrated Crop Management
Systems Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

For perennial weeds like Canada thistle, dandelion, toadflax and quackgrass, glyphosate products are registered to be applied prior to harvesting the crop. This is an excellent means of controlling perennial weeds because the timing allows glyphosate to be transported to the roots for the maximum

effect on perennial weeds. Remember to check the label to ensure specific brand products are registered for the crop you intend to apply it to and for the weeds you need to control.

Application information is listed on product labels showing the rates of application and pre-harvest intervals for harvesting the crop.

Be sure not to apply earlier than the hard-dough stage since this can result in reduced yield and excessive residues in the grain.

DO NOT use preharvest glyphosate on crops intended to be used for seed, since the risk of poor emergence the following year is very high.

Some glyphosate products allow aerial application for the pre-harvest timing only. Aerial applicators must undergo special training from the manufacturers, so check with the glyphosate manufacturer supporting aerial application for qualified pilots.

Desiccants are used to quickly remove the moisture from or "dry down" plant tissues in order to improve the ease of harvest. Desiccants are not moved within the plant and as a result only affect the tissues of the plants that they come in contact with. Desiccants have short delay intervals to harvest to allow plant tissues to dry sufficiently.

To ensure adequate coverage of applied herbicides or desiccants, make sure enough carrier water is used during application.

For glyphosate, apply the products in at least 23 L/acre of water for most applications; however, if the crop has a dense canopy, or if weed populations are high, then apply in at least 45 L/acre of water. For desiccants, the highest recommended water volumes typically result in the best performance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit SAF's website, www.agr.gov.sk.ca/Production, under Weeds. Title: Herbicide Options to Enhance Harvesting- FAQ; or
- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377; or
- Contact Dale Risula at 1-866-457-2377; Clark Brenzil at 306-787-4673.

HAY PRESERVATIVES AND INOCULANTS



By Murray Fenn
Ruminant Nutrition Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

Environmental conditions during haying can have great impact on the quality of the final hay bale that is produced. Standing crops are 70 to 80 per cent moisture when standing and must be baled at less than 18 per cent moisture to prevent heating and mold damage. Often, producers may be constrained with harvesting and baling hay at 20 to 30 per cent moisture. One tool available to producers when harvesting forages at high moisture levels is hay preservatives, usually applied in liquid form, during the baling process.

Hay preservatives come in three forms: organic acids, bacterial inoculants and anhydrous ammonia.

- Organic acids are applied to the hay at time of baling to produce an acidic environment which inhibits mold and bacterial growth. In their purest form, organic acids can be corrosive to equipment. However, commercial products often provide buffered acids that are less corrosive to equipment.



- Bacterial inoculants for hay are in fact silage inoculants. Theoretically, they work best in a high moisture, low oxygen environment. They are best used if moisture levels approach 30 to 40 per cent and the intention is to plastic wrap the bales (e.g. haylage). If moisture levels are lower than 30 per cent, high rates of application would be required in order to achieve any consistent level of preservation.

- Anhydrous ammonia is more commonly used to improve the quality of low quality forages, such as straw and chaff. When applied to forages, it binds with the moisture in the tissues, resulting in an increase in both protein and digestibility of the feed. As well, by binding the moisture, mold and bacterial growth are greatly reduced. The downside to using anhydrous ammonia on high quality forages, such as greenfeed, is that the ammonia acts on the soluble carbohydrates in the plant, converting them into a toxic compound called 4-methylimidazole. This toxic compound can cause "bovine bonkers" nervous disorder, death, as well as transfer in the milk to nursing calves. The use of anhydrous ammonia on high quality lush forages requires discretion.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377; or
- Visit the FAQ article available on the Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food website: www.agr.gov.sk.ca/Production under Storage. Title: Hay Preservatives- FAQs.





Bertha armyworm



By Scott Hartley
Provincial Specialist
Insect Pest Management
SAF

Traps containing artificial male attractants (pheromones) for Bertha armyworm were set up by co-operators in June 2007, to coincide with the emergence of the adult moths from over-wintering pupae. The 2007 SAF Bertha armyworm monitoring program uses the data acquired from the traps during June and July to produce weekly updated risk maps that can be viewed on the SAF website. This project is intended to provide an early warning for producers with respect to risk of Bertha armyworm larval infestations later in July and August. Host crops are primarily canola, but mustard, alfalfa and flax can also be severely affected.

In 2006, warm temperatures contributed to a rapid emergence and subsequent larval development of the majority of the Bertha armyworm population, allowing successful completion of their larval phase. This suggested there was a substantial reservoir of pupae in the soil last fall. Mid-July generally marks the peak of adult moth emergence. Eggs and young larvae can be observed in early July, but the armyworms are more destructive in more advanced stages as the season progresses. Although this monitoring program should not be a substitute for individual field scouting for larval populations, it has been useful in identifying "hotspots" of Bertha armyworm activity.



Bertha armyworm trap

Due to the outbreaks of Bertha armyworm in the past few years, there has been high interest in participation in this program in 2007, with about a 50 per cent increase in the number of trap sites. Therefore, there will be good coverage across Saskatchewan. In addition, Manitoba and Alberta have similar pheromone monitoring programs. All data is provided to Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada in Saskatoon to provide a prairie-wide outlook of Bertha armyworm population and potential risk for 2007.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit SAF's website www.agr.gov.sk.ca/ Production, under Insects. Titles: Bertha armyworm; Bertha armyworm map; or
- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Wheat midge update

By Scott Hartley
Provincial Specialist
Insect/Pest Management
SAF

SAF's 2007 Wheat Midge Forecast indicated a large area of high risk for wheat producers across Saskatchewan throughout the moist dark brown and black soil zones. Other areas on the forecast map indicating lower risk could also be affected by economic levels of the midge if there is good moisture.

Depending on climatic conditions, the adult midge starts to emerge from soil in late June, with peak populations appearing in the first two weeks of July. Monitoring wheat fields will be very important during the 2007 growing season when the adult midge are present and wheat is in the susceptible stage.

Wheat (including durum) is susceptible to midge damage when the wheat head becomes visible as the boot splits until mid-flowering (anthesis). Regular field scouting on successive nights is important in understanding the dynamics of the midge population in a particular field (i.e. are the numbers on the increase or already decreasing).

Temperature and wind will affect egg-laying of the adult female midge.

If the crop is in the susceptible stage, the action threshold or the infestation level at which an insecticide application is recommended is when the adult midge density is one midge per four to five heads. This correlates with about a 10 per cent yield reduction. Reduction in grade may be of greater concern as grade loss may have a greater economic impact. Therefore, an alternative action threshold is recommended to maintain optimum grade. In this situation, an insecticide should be applied if adult midge populations reach one per eight to 10 heads.

Note that late insecticide applications should be avoided, as this is not cost effective and can adversely affect the beneficial wasp parasites that aid in biological control of the midge.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit SAF's website www.agr.gov.sk.ca/ Production, under Insects. Titles: Wheat Midge; Wheat Midge FAQs; Wheat Midge Forecast; or
- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.



HOT OFF THE PRESS

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food is constantly updating the wealth of information it makes available to Saskatchewan residents. You can download the most current version of any document posted on our website. You can also call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377 to request a hard copy of many items. Below is a list of the latest documents posted, as well as the most frequently visited pages, on SAF's website at www.agr.gov.sk.ca/

AGRICULTURE CENSUS DATA

Data specific to Saskatchewan on various agricultural topics has been summarized and is available. Visit: Statistics

FAQ: IDENTIFYING WEEDS (BROAD-LEAFED)

What are some characteristics to look for when identifying weeds? What are the types of leaf arrangements and shapes? Visit: Production | Weeds

INVASIVE ALIEN PLANT PROGRAM

Promotes the development of long term weed management plans, in addition to the integrated weed management activities, begun under the Noxious Weeds Program. Visit: Production | Weeds

ASCOCHYTA BLIGHT: DISEASE SCOUTING AND FOLIAR FUNGICIDES

Provides information including identification, management steps and disease risk ratings for Ascochyta blight, which is the most damaging disease of chickpea in Western Canada. Visit: Production | Disease

NATURAL HEALTH PRODUCTS AND NATURAL FOODS OPPORTUNITIES

Saskatchewan is an ideal location for the production and processing of natural health products and functional foods. Visit: Organics | Opportunities

WHY RAISE SHEEP IN SASKATCHEWAN?

Saskatchewan is one of the most progressive provinces regarding sheep production, research and value added opportunities. Visit: Development | Investment Opportunities

HERB PRODUCTION

Provides information for herb production including growing, harvesting and marketing. Visit: Production | Crops | Overview

CANADA PRAIRIE SPRING WHEAT

Originally known for its medium protein, kernel hardness and dough strength properties, CPS wheat has recently become recognized as a viable feedstock for ethanol production. Visit: Production | Crops | Overview





New form of stem rust spreading



Stem rust photo courtesy Dr. Curt McCartney

By **Blaine Recksiedler, PAg**
Cereal and Organic Crop Specialist
SAF

A new form of stem rust (Ug99), first found in Uganda in 1999, has the potential to threaten global wheat yields. The majority of all wheat varieties planted in Asia and Africa are susceptible to Ug99. While a few varieties grown in Canada have some resistance, most do not.

The last major stem rust epidemic in North America occurred in the 1950s, destroying up to 40 per cent of the spring wheat crop.

Ug99 stem rust (*Puccinia graminis* f. sp. tritici) is virulent on wheat and barley.

Since being discovered in Uganda, Ug99 has spread as far as Yemen. If it follows the path of a yellow (stripe) rust that occurred in the 1980s, it could spread to the Middle East and Asia. Some predict this pathogen could spread around the world.

Plant breeders and pathologists are screening varieties in affected areas, to identify levels of resistance. Dr. Tom Fetch, rust pathologist with Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, advises that approximately 500 wheat and barley lines from western Canada will be screened in 2007.

An international consortium, Global Rust Initiative (GRI), has been formed to combat this particular pathogen. Funding is provided by various international agencies, including the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). A major proposal is also being submitted to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- visit the GRI website at <http://www.globalrust.org/>.

Scout for Sclerotinia stem rot



By **Penny Pearce**
Provincial Plant Disease Specialist
SAF

Sclerotinia stem rot, commonly known as white mould, can infect almost any broadleaf crop. Host crops include canola, mustard, flax, sunflower, borage, potato, pea, bean, lentil, chickpea, and forage legumes. Of these, canola is the main crop affected by sclerotinia stem rot in Saskatchewan (Figure 1).

In canola, yield losses due to sclerotinia stem rot vary from year to year as the disease is greatly influenced by weather conditions. Under high disease risk, sclerotinia stem rot can cause crop losses of greater than 50 per cent. Disease incidences are highest in the northern region, where moisture tends to be greater and a larger percentage of susceptible crops are grown.

This disease is aptly named white mould since the soft, wet lesions are commonly covered in a fuzzy white growth. Plant parts above the infected tissue will often turn pale green or yellow in colour, wilt and eventually die. Mature lesions are bleached and shred easily, resulting in premature ripening and lodging of the plant.

Since sclerotinia is not a problem in all years, it is important to monitor for the conditions that favour disease and spray fungicide if the risk of disease is high. Disease risk is high if:

(1) you've experienced losses due to sclerotinia in your region before, (2) wet conditions are present at early bloom, (3) the crop canopy is dense, and (4) yields are expected to be high enough to help pay for the cost of fungicide.

Determining whether or not a fungicide application is necessary can be a difficult decision. Once sclerotinia symptoms are present in a crop, foliar fungicides will not be effective.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit <http://www.agr.gov.sk.ca/Production/underDisease>; or
- Call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.



Figure 1. Sclerotinia stem rot in canola resulting in premature ripening and crop lodging. Photo courtesy of the Canola Council of Canada.

WINTER WHEAT: THINGS TO CONSIDER THIS SUMMER

By **Blaine Recksiedler, PAg**
Cereal and Organic Crop Specialist SAF

Winter wheat production is becoming increasingly more popular, thanks to improvements in variety characteristics and marketing opportunities, as well as better understanding of successful agronomic practices.

Producers need to consider the quality, disease, and winter hardiness traits of each variety. In addition to variety selection, there are a number of considerations that are very important regarding winter wheat production.

PLANNING

- **FIELD SELECTION** – since winter wheat is somewhat susceptible to water-logged soils, ensure the topography is suitable and drainage adequate. Snow cover is important for the protection of the overwintering crown tissue; therefore, selecting fields that offer suitable stubble is very important.
- **MANAGING THE SPRING CROP STUBBLE** – while avoiding seeding problems, the spring crop should be cut as high as possible, with the straw spread thoroughly.
- **SEED AND FERTILIZER ARRANGEMENTS** – winter wheat seeding usually coincides with harvesting of spring crops, so seed and fertilizer should be sourced well before fall harvest.

SEEDING

- **EQUIPMENT** – Equipment should be capable of seeding shallow, at a consistent depth, with minimal stubble disturbance.
- **SEEDING DATE** – development of healthy vigorous plants before freeze-up will improve the rate of winter survival; three or four true leaves with early first tiller development is ideal. The optimum window for seeding in Saskatchewan is from August 25 to September 10.
- **SEEDING DEPTH** – winter wheat should be seeded at a depth of less than one inch into a firm, moist seedbed. Seeding deeper can result in delayed emergence and spindly plants that are more susceptible to winter injury. Shallow seeded winter wheat will benefit from small rainfall events.

A winter wheat budget can be found in the Special Crops Guide in the series titled SAF Crop Planning Guides. This guide will help producers pencil out the economics of growing winter wheat on their farm.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Call the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377; or
- Visit www.usask.ca/agriculture/plantsci/winter_cereals/index.php.

This website includes the Top Ten Reasons to Grow Winter Wheat and the Winter Wheat Production Manual by Dr. Brian Fowler of the University of Saskatchewan.



THINGS TO REMEMBER WHEN HARVESTING, HANDLING AND STORING MUSTARD



By Patrick Mooleki
Crop Development Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre
& *Ray McVicar, Provincial Specialist,*
Special Crops, SAF

Mustard producers aim for the best grade – “No. 1 Canada.” This grade requires that seed be reasonably matured, and of good natural colour. The grade may contain no more than 1.5 per cent damaged seed, including no more than 0.1 per cent heated seed; no more than 0.3 per cent other conspicuous and separable seed, including no more than 0.1 per cent seeds that are detrimental to quality, such as cow cockle.

To reduce green count, mustard should be left to reach its physiological maturity. Yellow mustard is resistant to shattering and can be straight-combined. Brown and oriental mustard are less resistant to shattering and are usually swathed to cure in the windrow.

Swathing should begin when the majority of the seeds are at 25 per cent moisture, where seeds feel firm when pressed between the thumb and forefinger. Some pods will have developed a purple tinge; lower pods will have changed colour, but the upper pods will still be green. Crack the pods on the main stem and examine the seeds inside.

For oriental mustard, 75 per cent of the seeds should have some yellow colour. For brown mustard, 60 per cent of the seeds should have some reddish-brown colour. For yellow mustard, 100 per cent of the seeds should have turned yellow.

Extreme heat shortly after swathing, or a frost just before or after swathing, can reduce chlorophyll breakdown and lock in the green colour. When swathing, ensure that you cut just below the lowest pods to ensure that the stubble is high enough to anchor the windrow. Rolling may be necessary. Set the rollers such that over-ripe pods do not shatter and the windrow is open to allow drying.

If you decide to straight-combine, ensure that the crop is uniformly mature and has reached a moisture content of 12 to 13 per cent or less and no green seed can be found. Remember that desiccation does not assist in reducing green count; therefore, mustard should be sprayed according to the label.

Mustard seed should be stored at less than nine per cent moisture, and at a temperature of less than 15 °C to avoid mould growth and insect activity, as well as seed deterioration. As the grain continues to respire, it creates moist areas (sweating) in the bin that become hot spots. Therefore, stored grain should be aerated as soon as possible, until the temperature in the bin approaches the outside temperature. When the outside temperature has dropped another five to 10 °C, cool the mustard again.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Pulse crops: protect your investment at harvest time



By Ray McVicar
Provincial Specialist
Special Crops
SAF

With the exception of north-eastern Saskatchewan, where rain in September caused downgrading, most pulse crops were harvested in very good condition in 2006. In fact, there were more problems in storage after harvest than in the field during harvest.

The weather at harvest time is the uncontrollable factor that can really change quality for growers. However, carefully monitoring the crop throughout the growing season, and using the following well-known procedures, can help growers control yield, seed colour and quality.

- Plant diseases such as ascochyta blight can often cause discoloured seed. Monitor crops throughout the growing season, and protect the crop from disease spread onto the pods to reduce the risk of yield and grade loss.
- Use pick-up reels or lifter guards, which are standard issue on pulse harvesting equipment. They can turn a potential flat and tangled nightmare into just another crop.
- Add a flex-header or an air reel to combines to reduce losses and increase the speed of straight-cutting pulse crops. Peeled and chipped seeds quickly cause the loss of a grade. This can be reduced by fine-tuning the combine.
- Use desiccants, which do not mature the crop, but provide quicker dry down needed to reduce the risk of bleaching. REGLONE



DESICCANT® is registered for use on chickpea, pea, lentil, and dry bean. LIBERTY® is registered for use on lentil. Consult the product label.

- The high harvest temperatures in 2006 led to more oxidation and discolouration of stored pulses than normal. Always remember to thoroughly clean your bins to eliminate the risk of discoloured seeds. Do not blend this year's crop with the crop from a previous year.
- It's important to use aeration to cool pulse crops in the bin as soon as possible.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Consult the SAF publication Guide to Crop Protection at www.agr.gov.sk.ca/PDF/CPH010101.pdf under Disease; or
- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377.

Range/pasture assessment tool

By Michel Tremblay, Provincial Specialist,
Forage Crops, SAF

Traditionally, forage and rangelands in Saskatchewan were evaluated mainly by determining the presence and relative abundance of key plant species. Other parameters can also affect the function and stability of grasslands, including the level of dead vegetation protecting the soil surface (litter), exposed soil, erosion, and the presence of non-native vegetation.

New health assessment methodologies are being developed and field tested by a steering committee of federal, provincial, and industry specialists. The project is funded by Greencover Canada, and is co-ordinated by the Prairie Conservation Action Plan.

Methodologies for four vegetation types are being refined: native prairie; forested range sites; riparian areas; and seeded grasslands. Sites are scored along a gradient to rank relative stability, and ultimately productivity, using vegetation and non-vegetation site characteristics.

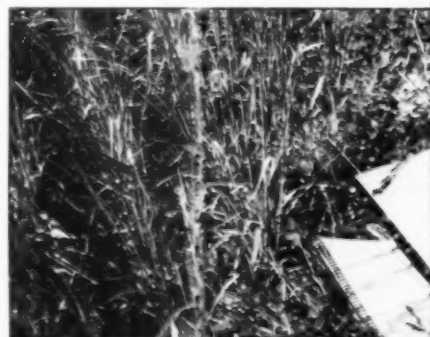
The presence of desirable and undesirable plant species, a greater than normal level of exposed soil, the extent of invasive species and noxious weeds, and litter levels, are all measured when completing the assessment. Quantifying key indicators of site health and productivity will

allow land managers to tailor management to improve soil protection and productivity of the vegetation. Economic and environmental benefits are the result of enhanced land management.

Four field guides and rating forms will be developed by spring 2008, one for each vegetation type. Rangeland health assessment protocols tailored to Saskatchewan conditions will provide land managers with an intensive assessment tool to determine ecological health and productivity on a large area of Saskatchewan vegetation types.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Michel Tremblay at 306-787-7712, or e-mail him at michel.tremblay@agr.gov.sk.ca.





Livestock Loan Guarantee Programs assist producers in expansion of the Saskatchewan feedlot industry



By Mark Folk
Manager
Livestock Loan Guarantee Program
SAF

Mark Folk, manager of the Livestock Loan Guarantee Program (LLG) administered by Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food, says that the program has a number of options to assist producers in accessing capital for the feedlot industry.

"The Feedlot Construction Loan Guarantee Program, for example, has enabled producers to negotiate funding terms that allow them to reduce the amount of working capital they have to commit to the construction portion of a project," Folk said. "This benefit enables producers to keep cash flow accessible for operational needs."

The program offers loan guarantees to lenders who provide financing for new or expanding feedlots in Saskatchewan. For a loan to be eligible for a guarantee, the proceeds must be used for eligible construction costs.

Producers can apply for guarantees on approved loans from a minimum of \$50,000 to a maximum of \$3 million.

There are currently five Feedlot Construction Loan Guarantees approved in Saskatchewan. These guarantees represent an investment of approximately 3.9 million by producers.

"These investments have expanded the provincial feeding capacity by more than 20,000 head," Folk said.

Another option under the LLG program is the Individual Cattle Feeder Loan Guarantee Program. It provides guarantees to lenders who provide loans to individuals purchasing feeder steers and heifers (the animals must be fed in Saskatchewan.) Producers are eligible to apply for guarantees on approved loans ranging from \$500,000 to a maximum of \$3 million.

To participate in the Individual Feeder Cattle Loan Guarantee Program, producers are required to maintain an assurance fund deposit with their lender of 9.5 per cent of the loan outstanding and 0.5 per cent of their approved loan on deposit in a provincial assurance fund. Producers are also required to be a member of the Provincial Feeder Co-op Ltd., the group that administers the program on behalf of producers.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Financial Programs Branch, SAF, at 306-787-5275; or
- Visit www.agr.gov.sk.ca/ProgramsServices

CHANGES TO VERIFIED BEEF PRODUCTION PROGRAM



By Bob Klemmer, MAg PAg
Beef-Forage Specialist
Agriculture Knowledge Centre

The Verified Beef Production program (VBP), Canada's on-farm food safety program, has been streamlined to strengthen its focus on food safety and reduce unnecessary complexity. This is part of a national effort to provide comparative on-farm food safety programs which are equivalent and low-cost. Changes to the national program focus on revisions to the producer manual and required record keeping.

The producer manual has been simplified to improve ease of reading, and reduce record redundancy. The overall focus on food safety has been strengthened without increasing record keeping complexity. Changes simplify the handling and record keeping requirements for medicated feed, making it more outcome-based. Due to the release of new products for weed control on hay and pasture, a record keeping requirement for use of herbicides on pasture/hay fields, and a records check before cattle are allowed access, has been added.

These changes bring the requirements for Verified Beef Production in line with Canadian



Quality Milk (CQM), the longer-running, national dairy on-farm food safety program. In future, this should streamline the independent audit process, allowing auditors to do combined audits on multi-commodity farms, thereby reducing audit costs for producers.

At the provincial level, the Saskatchewan Quality Starts Here/Verified Beef Production (QSH/VBP) Working Group Inc., Saskatchewan's delivery agent for the VBP program, has also undertaken a major reorganization to streamline operations and reduce producer costs. It has become very clear to the producer owned and operated Saskatchewan QSH/VBP Working Group Inc. that the longevity of this program in Saskatchewan depends on development of a lower-cost delivery model.

Consequently, the Working Group has undertaken major structural changes, and reduced its staff requirements.

On June 5, 2007, Jodie Horvath, a beef producer from Kelliher, began work as the new Provincial Co-ordinator. In the next few months, the Working Group will be focusing on changes to program delivery.

"Recent changes to the national and Saskatchewan VBP Program promise to simplify the process and reduce registration costs for beef producers in Canada's own beef on-farm food safety program," Horvath said. "A stronger focus on food safety issues, simplified record keeping and streamlined delivery will bring VBP to more Saskatchewan producers than ever."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Jodie Horvath PAg, Provincial Co-ordinator Saskatchewan QSH/VBP, 306-675-6177, or e-mail jhorvath@sasktel.net; or
- Contact the Agriculture Knowledge Centre at 1-866-457-2377; or
- Visit www.qualitystartshere.sk.ca, or www.qualitystartshere.org





VALUE CHAIN PROGRAM PROFILE



By Gary Coghill
Value Chain Development Specialist
Food Safety, Regulatory Services
SAF

The Saskatchewan Value Chain Program, which began accepting applications in May 2005, is aimed at producer groups and agribusiness that wish to access new markets or launch new products. The Value Chain Program can help to identify new products demanded by a group of consumers and establish production and processing protocols to produce these new products. Many markets require minimum volumes of a product in order to make a sale. The Value Chain Program can assist producer groups and agri-businesses to assemble the volume of product that is required by the market.

The Value Chain Program funds up to 50 per cent of the total costs (to a maximum of \$100,000 per project). The Value Chain Program funds are allocated in two phases: \$30,000 for phase 1 and \$70,000 for phase 2. Phase 1, entitled Building Value Chain Awareness and Education, Concept Development and Training, is for value chain projects in the early stages of development. Phase 2, entitled Value Chain Initiative and Implementation, is available to those who are in a working value chain with at least three supply chain links and where the opportunity for the chain has been clearly identified. To date, Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) has approved 13 projects for a total of \$527,550 under the Value Chain Program.

A value chain is a market-focused collaboration between different business firms which agree to improve and market a product. A value chain is demand-driven rather than supply-driven. Its primary focus is to respond more effectively to the needs of the marketplace through co-operative communication and co-ordination. The chart below gives the basic differences between value chain and traditional business relationships.

Comparison of Traditional and Value Chain Business Relationships

	Traditional	Value Chain
Information Sharing	Little or None	Extensive
Primary Focus	Cost Price	Value/Quality
Relationships	Transactional	Collaborative/Partnership
Product Relationship	Supplier/Client	Demanded/Value
Communication Medium	Transactional	Collaborative/Partnership
Product Price	Set/Unchangeable	Value/Quality/Partnership

In 2005, SAF partnered with Saskatchewan Council for Community Development (SCCD) to promote value chains within the province. The partnership, called the Saskatchewan Agri-Food Value Chain Initiative, increases awareness of value chains, offers training, provides expertise in building business relationships and facilitates collaboration between value chain partners. Under the Saskatchewan Agri-Food Value Chain Initiative, we have developed a series of six modules of value chain workshops and held 15 workshops throughout the province.



Canadian Prairie Bison's European value chain

By Gary Coghill
Value Chain Development Specialist, SAF; and
Dallas Carpenter
Communications Officer, SCCD

Well known in Saskatchewan for being a lean and flavourful meat, bison is now gaining popularity around the world. With the potential for Saskatchewan's bison producers to reach lucrative markets in Europe, Canadian Prairie Bison (CPB) has recently started the European Value Chain Initiative.

On behalf of bison producers in its All-Natural Bison Program, CPB is marketing Saskatchewan bison throughout Europe. Currently, full, deboned carcasses are being exported to Europe, where the meat is processed into steaks, roasts, burgers and sausages. The finished product is branded as Canadian when being sold in restaurants and stores.

"The demand in Europe for bison is growing and they really appreciate the product," says Marketing Manager, Roger Provencher. "This value chain has the potential to have a huge impact and will lead to a more diversified bison industry. As the awareness and demand for bison in Europe grows, it will allow us to get a premium price for our products."

Started in 2001 as the Bison Feeder Co-operative of Saskatchewan, CPB is one of the largest marketing groups for bison and value added bison products in Canada. The European Value Chain Initiative has been established with funding from the Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) Value Chain Program, which is funded through the Federal/Provincial Agricultural Policy Framework. Assistance is also being provided through the Saskatchewan Agri-Food Value Chain Initiative of the Saskatchewan

Council for Community Development (SCCD), which is funded by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada through the Advancing Canadian Agriculture and Agri-Food Saskatchewan program.

Producers involved in the value chain will be required to take an education and awareness program so they know and are following the practices and procedures required by the European Union for importing bison. "Our products are recognized as safe by Europe, exceeding their requirements," said Provencher. "The producers in this value chain are hand picked by Canadian Prairie Bison and are audited by myself. They are also required to sign affidavits stating there are no growth hormones or antibiotics in the animals they raise."

To launch and market the European Value Chain Initiative, CPB attended the SIAL Global Food Marketplace tradeshow in Paris, France. This tradeshow provided CPB with exposure to many

European food distributors. So far, contacts have been made in France, Germany, Denmark, and Switzerland to distribute CPB product.

"Saskatchewan's bison is some of the best in the world," said Provencher. "The funding and support from SAF and SCCD has been important as a young and growing company, and it is allowing us to get out there, grow our industry, and show the world what Saskatchewan has to offer."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Roger Provencher, by phone at 306-468-2930, or e-mail cpb2001@sasktel.net; or
- For information on SAF's Value Chain Program, call Gary Coghill at 306-787-8537.

"Saskatchewan's bison is some of the best in the world."

**—Roger Provencher,
Canadian Prairie Bison**





VALUE CHAIN PROGRAM PROFILE



By Gary Coghill
Value Chain Development Specialist
Food Safety, Regulatory Services
SAF

The Saskatchewan Value Chain Program, which began accepting applications in May 2005, is aimed at producer groups and agribusiness that wish to access new markets or launch new products. The Value Chain Program can help to identify new products demanded by a group of consumers and establish production and processing protocols to produce these new products. Many markets require minimum volumes of a product in order to make a sale. The Value Chain Program can assist producer groups and agribusinesses to assemble the volume of product that is required by the market.

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Comparison of Traditional and Value Chain Business Relationships

	Traditional	Value Chain
Information Sharing	Little or None	Extensive
Primary Focus	Cost/Price	Value/Quality
Orientation	Commodity	Differentiated Product
Power Relationship	Supply Push	Demand Pull
Organizational Structure	Independent	Interdependent
Philosophy	Self-Optimization	Chain Optimization

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Agri-business Entrepreneurship Program



Agri-business Entrepreneurship program participants and instructors



By John Ippolito
Agri-Business Development Specialist
SAF

The Agri-business Entrepreneurship Program is a week long course conducted at the University of Saskatchewan with instructors from the College of Commerce and the College of Agriculture and Bioresources. This program has been in place for several years, and is targeted at farm managers to assist them

in the development and ongoing management of successful agri-business ventures.

There are three main focus areas to the Agri-business Entrepreneurship program. Considerable emphasis is placed on understanding the ever changing agri-business environment, as well as the trends and challenges facing agriculture on a global and local basis. Participating farm managers receive the tools to build a sustainable competitive advantage and adapt to this environment of change.

The second focus area for this program is the management of integrated agri-business organizations. This covers financial management from both a personal and business context. Exercises such as in-depth analysis of a recent business plan are part of the course work in this session. Participants practise their knowledge and skills through an agri-business management simulation exercise that includes testing the strategies of the business plan.

Marketing is an important aspect of business management and is dealt with extensively.

Presenters cover development of the marketing plan, and in-depth topics including market segmentation and targeting, moving beyond the selling of commodities, and measuring and forecasting of market demand.

The 2007 workshop included 26 participants comprising representatives from industry, government, and producers from all types of enterprises. In many cases the producers had already developed an entrepreneurial enterprise on their farm, such as pasture-raised chickens, the New York Stick (a prepared meat snack available through convenience stores), and finished fibre products from an alpaca operation. During the week, the agri-business management participants had the opportunity to share their experiences, as well as learn from each other.

The Agri-business Entrepreneurship program is an excellent learning opportunity for producers looking to improve their business management skills. It is delivered in late January, so watch for promotions in early winter 2007.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Pat England, Co-ordinator, Agri-business Entrepreneurship Program, 306-665-1678.

BLOOMING SASKATOON BUSINESS!

By Gary Coghill
Value Chain Development Specialist
Food Safety, Regulatory Services
SAF

Step aside blueberries! PURPLE PACKS A PUNCH!

The market for Saskatoon berries is growing rapidly both inside and outside of Canada. The reason is clear: in a market where consumers are seeking tasty and healthy food, saskatoons are unique and nutritious. When compared against blueberries and black currents, saskatoons have significantly higher levels of antioxidants—known cancer-fighting agents.

When Ken and Sandy Purdy, owners and operators of Prairie Berries, realized the nutritional benefits of saskatoons, they decided that growing and processing these berries would be an important part of their future. Prairie Berries started their saskatoon orchard in 1993, and, a few years later, began processing berries for the domestic market. Prairie Berries' products include IQF (Individually Quick Frozen) berries, fruit toppings, pie fillings, purees, concentrates and dried berries. The demand for the company's products continued to grow, and Prairie Berries required more saskatoon growers to meet the demand. In 2001, there were seven growers working as part of their value chain. In 2003,



Prairie Berries began working with Saskatoon Berry Partners Inc., a group of 14 growers. In 2005, Prairie Berries added four growers in Alberta and one grower in Manitoba.

Prairie Berries, located at Keeler, Saskatchewan, is expanding its business relationship with a major distributor in Europe. With the increase in demand for berries, they are expanding their own orchard and looking for new growers. The orchard, planted in June 2007, will become the largest saskatoon orchard in the world! The expansion of 120 acres represents over 100,000 trees. Prairie Berries is not only excited about the new berry production, but also their contribution to a healthier environment. Assuming that one tree produces enough oxygen for 18 people per year, the expanded orchard will produce enough oxygen to sustain 1.8 million people.

Prairie Berries is seeking more new growers to supply saskatoons to the European distributor. The new growers will become part of Prairie Berries European Agri-Food Value Chain. Collaboration between the growers, Prairie Berries and the European distributor will help to ensure a consistent supply for the European market. The Value Chain strategy is a market-focused approach that builds on collaboration among berry producers, processors and distributors working together to produce and market value-added saskatoon products.

Prairie Berries Inc. operates an orchard, a federally registered primary processing plant (cleaning, grading, freezing, packaging) and a secondary processing plant (manufacturing saskatoon products). They are committed to working with growers, customers and employees to develop beneficial long-term alliances to produce, process and market saskatoons.

Story contributor: Sandra Purdy, Prairie Berries.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact Sandra Purdy at 306-788-2018, or at prairieberries@sasktel.net.





CROP INSURANCE: PREHARVEST REMINDERS

By Trilby Henderson

Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

Crop Insurance knows the period between seeding and harvest remains a busy time for producers. It is also an important time to ensure you are familiar with the terms of the Crop Insurance program and your obligations as a contract holder. Following are a few conditions you should be aware of before harvest begins.

STATEMENTS OF INSURANCE

Now that you have submitted your Seeded Acreage Report and Stored Grain Declaration forms, you can expect to receive your Statement of Insurance in the mail. Your Statement of Insurance will list your insured crops, total number of acres seeded, production guarantee, premium, discount or surcharge, and the provincial/federal and producer share of the total premium.

Make sure you carefully examine your statement and report any errors or omissions to Crop Insurance immediately. Crop Insurance will amend your coverage and/or claims if errors are identified by either the corporation or yourself.

PRE-HARVEST APPRAISALS

If you suffer significant damage to your insured crops over the summer, or if your plans change and you wish to put your crop to an alternate use such as grazing, baling or abandoning, you must contact Crop Insurance immediately. An adjuster must complete a pre-harvest appraisal on your crop, inspecting any acres before they can be put to another use.

During an appraisal, the adjuster will complete plant counts, determine the acreage, and assess the cause of loss. Your yields will be determined at the time of the appraisal, and the appraised value of your crop will be used in the calculation of any claims.

Any production that could be harvested is included in the appraisal, regardless of grade. If you believe that quality losses are putting you in a claim position, discuss the procedure for including a potential quality loss in your claim with your adjuster.

Claims will be paid when all acres of your crop have been accounted for. Remember, Crop Insurance does not require producers to harvest a crop to receive a claim payment, but all production must be accounted for through either a pre-harvest appraisal or a production declaration.

SUMMERFALLOW REQUIREMENTS

In Saskatchewan, crops seeded into summerfallow are generally considered to have a higher yield potential. Crop Insurance takes this into consideration when determining claims. Customers must meet Crop Insurance's minimum requirements in order for land to be eligible as summerfallow. To learn more about minimum summerfallow requirements, visit www.saskcropinsurance.com and check the June deadlines under the CI Calendar.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Contact Crop Insurance toll-free at 1-888-935-0000. Staff are available to answer any questions you may have.

Renewal Success Story



By Lyle Stavness
Renewal Program Manager
CASS

"We had a real wreck going on here, but with the right tools in place, we were able to turn it around." So says Ernest Proust, a successful horse trainer, farmer and cattleman near Estevan.

Turn the clock back to the spring of 2003. The Proust family had decided to invest in its cattle operation, increasing herd size and converting cropped land into grass. Ernest had begun a horse training business and word of his skill was just starting to spread. And then BSE hit the beef industry, which effectively dried up their cash flow.

The Proust farm fell behind in their payments, to the point where creditors proposed foreclosure. But Ernest had plans beyond this crisis. He discovered Ag Canada's Farm Business Advisory Services (FBAS). By signing up for the program, he was able to access \$2,500 worth of specialized financial and strategic planning assistance, at a cost of only \$100.

A consultant came to his farm and analyzed the Proust's finances and Ernest's plans for the future. Together, they came up with a plan to turn things around. They brought it to the creditors and were able to work out a refinancing package.

"Working with a consultant certainly opened our eyes," says Ernest now. "They see these



situations all the time—they can bring their ideas for some different ways to make it work."

The service provides an outside look at your farm's profitability, whether you're in financial distress or not. Along with the initial assessment, the program includes a free follow-up with your consultant one year later. Since going through the process, Ernest has increased the horse training side of his business, a move that has made a \$35,000 difference to his bottom line.

Would Ernest recommend the process to other farmers? "Absolutely," he says. "The biggest favour farmers can do for themselves is to bring in professional help. These guys will do the math and sort out the ratios. They can sit at your kitchen table and help show you the bottom line."

"We went through some difficult times," Ernest says, "but in a way, things have really turned out for the best."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit www.agt.gc.ca/crctm or call 1-866-452-5558.

Check out CropConnect

By Trilby Henderson

Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation

Crop Insurance's CropConnect is a free service that gives you online access to your personal contract information, enabling you to easily complete the various requirements of your crop insurance contract throughout the year.

Crop Insurance is continually improving CropConnect to make it more comprehensive and convenient to use. As a CropConnect customer, you can: complete personal premium and coverage calculations; enter and view your 2007 endorsement selections; view your land, claim, and yield history; complete your seeded acreage reports and personalized production declarations; and update your demographic information.

Crop Insurance follows a strict privacy policy, so you can be assured your personal information is well protected. The corporation requests the minimum amount of information necessary to provide you with secure access to CropConnect, and does

not share your personal account information with any other party. In addition, when you enrol in CropConnect, Crop Insurance will only use your e-mail address to send you CropConnect information.

If you are interested in joining CropConnect, contact Crop Insurance's help desk at 1-800-422-1943. All you need to enrol is an active e-mail address and the legal name on your contract of insurance. You will be given a temporary password when you enrol, and will be able to select your own personal password upon accessing the program. It is important to choose a password that is easy for you to remember, but difficult for others to guess.

Help desk staff are available from 7 a.m. to noon, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Customers can enrol in CropConnect at any time throughout the year.

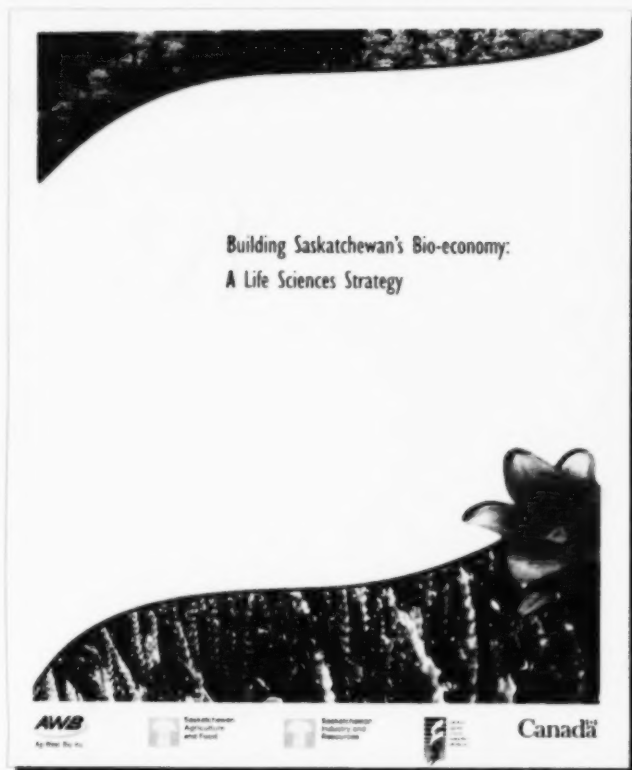
FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact your local customer service office; or
- Visit www.saskcropinsurance.com.





Saskatchewan's life sciences sector has promising future



Building Saskatchewan's Bio-economy:
A Life Sciences Strategy



By Abdul Jalil
Director
Agriculture Research Branch
SAF

Saskatchewan can become a global leader in the life sciences sector by focusing on biofuels and bio-products, nutrition, health and wellness, said a report released in May.

The report was based on a survey and analysis conducted by the Conference Board of Canada, and highlights the strengths of Saskatchewan's life sciences sector. Over 100 Saskatchewan life sciences companies contributed information to the report—designed to encourage action within the community.

Saskatchewan is a growing national and international leader in biofuels, and this report further reinforces the contention that Saskatchewan is a national centre of excellence in biofuels. Developing this life science strategy will help us better understand what Saskatchewan offers in the bio-products field, which will further help consumers and customers.

Saskatchewan has the land base necessary to grow a variety of crops for many different markets. We are the largest single source of agricultural biomass in Canada. The expanding agricultural research sector, including the University of Saskatchewan,

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's research centre, the National Research Council's biotechnology institute, the POS Pilot Plant and the Vaccine and Infectious Disease Organization, ensures a steady stream of innovative products, ready for commercialization.

With this report, the life sciences community is ready for action. The report identifies a number of initiatives that will build upon Saskatchewan's existing natural advantages of abundant supply and world-class research. It recommends building leadership in biofuels and bio-products by establishing an industry-led centre to champion the industry, and expanding our existing nutrition and health and wellness industries. It also recommends capitalizing on the province's strengths in immunology, vaccines and contract research services; increasing investment in research and development; developing, attracting and retaining talent; increasing the number and strength of the province's life science companies; attracting risk capital and communicating the strengths of Saskatchewan in the life sciences.

A copy of the report is available from Ag-West Bio.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Visit the Ag-West Bio website at www.agwestbio.ca.

\$5.0 MILLION INVESTMENT IN GRAINS INNOVATION LABORATORY

By Abdul Jalil
Director
Agriculture Research Branch
SAF

The federal and provincial governments provided \$5.0 million in funding to build a new 9,120 square foot Grains Innovation Laboratory adjacent to the Crop Science Field Laboratory, Pulse Quality Lab and the new Feed Technology Research Facility at the University of Saskatchewan.

The province's agriculture and agri-food industry is heavily dependent on the export market. In order to continue building on our earlier successes and to maintain our competitive advantages in the global market, we must meet and exceed market demand and consumer preferences.

Saskatchewan's agriculture and agri-food industry is built on quality attributes, and is recognized around the world for its high quality standards. Quality refers to the inherent or distinctive characteristics of our crops and products which sets us apart from our competitors. Improving the quality of crops is a high priority for Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF). The Grains Innovation Laboratory is designed to do just that.

At the University of Saskatchewan's Crop Development Centre (CDC), improving the quality of cereals, pulses and flax is a very high priority in all plant breeding programs. Further improvement and diversification of grain quality is becoming more important, as plant breeders strive to develop varieties that will support value-added processing opportunities, meet the needs of the rapidly developing bioenergy and bioproducts sectors, lead to improved health outcomes for our consumers, and enhance environmental and economic sustainability. The greatest potential for enhancement of crop quality appears to be in the areas of functional foods, nutraceuticals, bioenergy and bioproducts. Environmental sustainability can be enhanced through the development of traits such as low-phytate cereals and pulses for livestock feed and improved pest resistance. Increasing value-added processing opportunities together with agronomic performance will contribute to improved economic sustainability for the province.

Both the University of Saskatchewan and SAF are confident that the addition of the Grains Innovation Lab at the CDC will ensure the continued success of Saskatchewan's agriculture and agri-food industry.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact the Crop Development Centre at 306-966-8195; or
- Visit www.ag.usask.ca/departments/plsc/about/crop_development.html; or
- Visit www.agr.gov.sk.ca/CropDevelopment.





Opportunities in functional food market

By Abdul Jalil
Director
Agriculture Research Branch
SAF

Although he lived in Nova Scotia his whole life, Dr. Michael Nickerson had no qualms about moving to Saskatchewan when he was accepted as the Saskatchewan Research Chair in Protein Quality and Utilization under the Strategic Research Program, an initiative funded and administered by Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food.

When he began his academic career, he had no inkling that he would eventually end up at the University of Saskatchewan. He started out in marine biology, concentrating in aquaculture, but he came across the Food Science Department at Dalhousie University when he was looking for a graduate program. It was at Dalhousie that he obtained both his Master's degree and his Ph.D.

Most of Dr. Nickerson's post-doctoral studies have been spent researching ingredient delivery systems developed from plant-based compounds. These systems allow us to deliver a specific ingredient to a specific part of the body (i.e. releasing beneficial bacteria in the small intestine, where it is needed, instead of in the stomach).

Currently, Dr. Nickerson is looking into microcapsule delivery systems—micron-sized packages made from plant protein—to deliver bioactive compounds such as flax oil. This will allow food manufacturers to use a stable form of flax oil in a host of recipes and food products.

He is also working to deliver prebiotic and probiotic bacteria as ingredients for food and feed.

There is a tremendous push to avoid using animal-based proteins, such

as gelatin, in the functional food market. The market is moving to plant proteins as an alternative delivery system, he explained.

Dr. Nickerson says his work holds a great deal of relevance for the average producer.

"It's estimated that the functional food market in the global economy will be worth about US\$500 billion per year by 2010, three per cent of which is Canadian. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada anticipates producers could potentially realize between \$300 million and \$1 billion by growing the raw ingredients used to support this industry," he stated.

The current plant protein industry in Saskatchewan is primarily focused on animal feed; however, his research intends to broaden its use to include the functional food market.

"I'm taking the protein already extracted from the crop, and then finding applications for those proteins based on their functional properties. The benefits to producers are new markets, increased product demand, increased prices and improved price stability," he said.



Dr. Michael Nickerson
Saskatchewan Research Chair in Protein Quality

PAMI RELEASES SOFTWARE TO AID IN AGRI-BUSINESS DECISIONS



By Chantal Stumborg
Program Manager
Soils, Environment, Horticulture
and Alternative Crops
Agriculture Research Branch

After months of research and development, the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute (PAMI) has released an innovative software program created to aid producers and entrepreneurs in making critical agricultural business decisions.

The project, which was funded by Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food's Agriculture Development Fund, was initiated to look at the economics of whole-crop harvesting, but the resulting computer program can be applied to many different types of farming operations, explained Les Hill, the Business Development and Technical Services Manager for PAMI.

"The basis of the program is an outline of a farm model, including multiple crops, prices, yield and the cost of growing the crops, which are re-configurable to different farm situations," he said. Producers input data to create a farm model, then the program shows

the producer the impact of selecting various pieces of equipment for cutting and gathering, combining and handling the grain. The producer can also calculate the economic cost of various different methods of byproduct harvesting based on the choice of equipment.

The program also offers an option to create a second farm plan alongside the first one, so that producers can compare and contrast different variations of inputs and approaches. Hill says the goal was to enable as many combinations as farmers might want to see in order to get their farm plans just the way they want them.

He said the comprehensiveness of the program is one of its best features, enabling producers to look at the full implications of any decision on their overall farming operation.

An overview of the "complete system" is provided wherever possible. For example, Hill says the machinery section includes financing and depreciation information, which can significantly affect a lot of the choices a farmer might make.

The flexibility of the program allows producers to set their parameters and to tailor the program to suit every possible scenario in which they might be interested, he stated. "What if I were to go for higher-yield crops? What if I were to change my approach here? What would this do for me?"

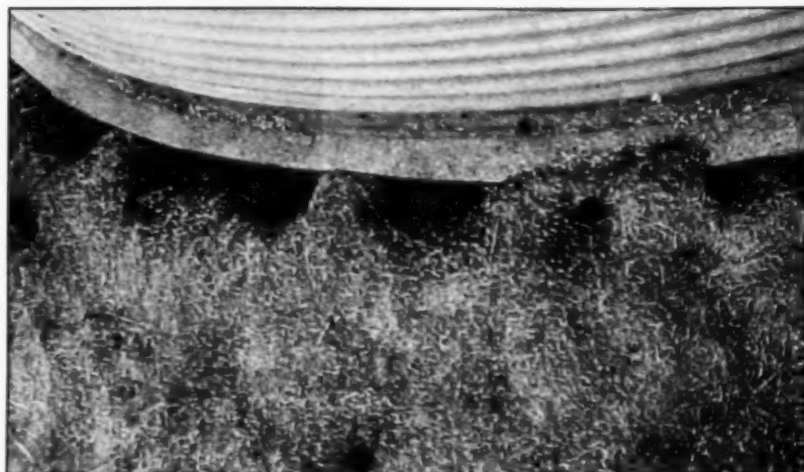
FOR MORE INFORMATION
• Contact PAMI at 1-800-567-7264.

PAMI





Province introduces changes to pest control program



By Cameron Wilk, P.Ag
Manager, Regulatory Services
Pesticide Regulatory Management
SAF

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) has transferred the administration of the grants associated with the Agricultural Fieldworker Program to the Provincial Council of ADD (Agriculture Development and Diversification) Boards (PCAB).

Saskatchewan began a co-ordinated pest control program with the introduction of the Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food Fieldworker Policy in 1972. Grants are provided through the Fieldworker Policy to the ADD boards and Rural Municipalities.

ADD boards and RMs work together to co-ordinate control programs at the local level. Pest control officers, employed by ADD Boards and RMs, deliver the program at the field level to help property owners develop effective control methods. PCAB's pest control co-ordinators focus on creating a more uniform pest control program in Saskatchewan.

"By taking over responsibility for distributing funding to the individual ADD boards, PCAB will be able to streamline the funding process

in order to provide more uniform provincial program delivery," said Agriculture and Food Minister Mark Wartman. "PCAB will also be able to encourage and ensure more consistent reporting from district ADD boards."

Under the terms of the new agreement, PCAB receives \$540,000 from Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food for the 2007/08 fiscal year to deliver the Agricultural Fieldworker Program. Out of that amount, \$395,000 is distributed throughout the ADD board system to hire pest control officers. The remaining money is used to fund provincial pest control co-ordinators, as required, and to undertake educational programs for both farmers and pest control officers on rodent identification and control.

The Provincial Council of Agriculture Development and Diversification Boards for Saskatchewan Inc. (PCAB) is a non-profit agricultural organization that focuses on timely, effective delivery of agricultural programs to Saskatchewan producers. PCAB is committed to working with both government and industry to ensure a co-operative, efficient approach to agricultural program delivery.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Contact PCAB at 306-955-5477.

SAF'S REGIONAL OFFICES: PRACTICAL ADVICE FROM PRACTICAL PEOPLE

Do you want help in moving your agri-business ideas through the development process?

Do you want help in building community support for your new or expanding agriculture business?

Do you want to learn about new technology that will help you increase your competitive advantage?

Then drop in or call your local Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food Regional Office today. Our specialists are on hand to give advice and support to all types of livestock, crops, forage and value-added processing businesses.



Farmers connect at forage meeting.

So, why wait? We will help you access the programs you need.

Visit or call us today, or check us out on our website at www.agr.gov.sk.ca and click on Regional Development Teams/Offices & Locations.

North Battleford	1192 - 102nd Street 306-446-7964
Outlook	420 Saskatchewan Avenue W. 306-867-5575
Prince Albert	800 Central Avenue 306-953-2363
Regina	515 Henderson Drive 306-787-9773
Saskatoon	3830 Thatcher Avenue 306-933-7986
Swift Current	350 Cheadle Street W. 306-778-8285
Tisdale	1105 - 99th Street W. 306-878-8842
Weyburn	110 Souris Avenue 306-848-2857
Yorkton	38 - 5th Avenue N. 306-786-1531





FAQs on Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food website

Do you have a question about diseases in pulses? What about swath grazing?

The SAF website provides direct access to frequently asked questions (FAQs) our agriculture clients may have. With just one click of your mouse, you can access this single page containing questions and answers on a wide range of subjects.

How do you get to this wealth of information?

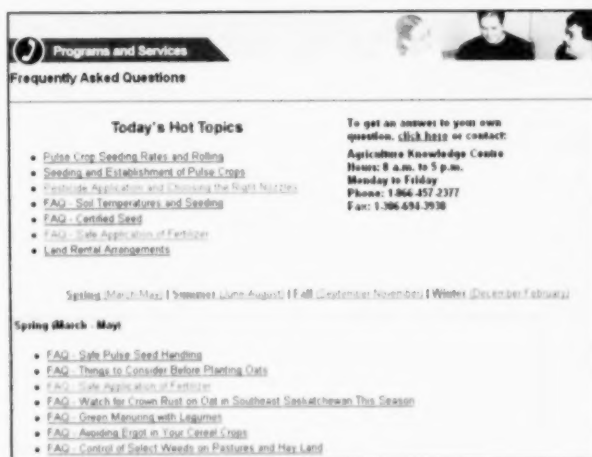
**Minister
Programs &
Services
About Us
Contact Us
FAQs
Calendar
Site Map
Links**

On the right-hand side of SAF's front page, you will find a menu containing the FAQs link which takes you directly to the FAQs page.

The FAQs page was developed by the department's Agriculture Knowledge Centre (AKC) in order to answer the most common questions they received during a particular time of year. The information provided on this page is constantly evolving and growing, as new questions and situations arise in the province.

You can also find questions and answers on unusual topics, such as a disease outbreak

when circumstances warrant it. For example, SAF developed an FAQ page on anthrax last year to provide more information to producers on the anthrax outbreak.



Programs and Services
Frequently Asked Questions

Today's Hot Topics

- Pulse Crop Seeding Rates and Rotations
- Seeding and Establishment of Pulse Crops
- Pesticide Application and Choosing the Right Product
- FAQ - Soil Temperatures and Seeding
- FAQ - Certified Seed
- FAQ - Safe Application of Fertilizer
- Land Rental Arrangements

To get an answer to your own question, click [here](#) or contact:
Agriculture Knowledge Centre
Hours: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Monday to Friday
Phone: 1-866-457-2377
Fax: 1-306-493-3930

Spring (March-May) | Summer (June-August) | Fall (September-November) | Winter (December-February)

Spring (March-May)

- FAQ - Safe Pulse Seed Handling
- FAQ - Things to Consider Before Planting Oats
- FAQ - Safe Application of Fertilizer
- FAQ - Watch for Crown Rust on Oat in Southeast Saskatchewan This Season
- FAQ - Green Manuring with Legumes
- FAQ - Assembling Equipment in Your Greenhouse
- FAQ - Control of Select Weeds on Pastures and Hay Land

The FAQ page consists of a "Hot Topics" area and a list of the FAQs separated into the four seasons. Also on the page is the contact information for the AKC and a link to a form where you can submit your own question in order to get an answer.

Check it out; you may find the answers you are looking for on SAF's Frequently Asked Questions page.



FINDING THE VALUE - DRIVEN BY WATER

Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food's (SAF) Irrigation Development Branch and the Irrigation Crop Diversification Corporation (ICDC) are showcasing a diverse number of projects this summer, including the launching of new projects and the continuation or refocusing of other projects for the 2007 season. SAF partners with ICDC on mutually agreeable research and development (R&D) projects, which are implemented and managed by SAF Irrigation Agrologists.

Several summer events are planned:

- An ICDC irrigated Annual Forage Variety Trial with barley, oat and triticale will be featured at the Semi-arid Prairie Agricultural Research Centre (SPARC), which is hosting a **Forage and Grazing Research Tour on June 26 in Swift Current**. For more information or to register, call 1-306-778-8285.
- Two new demonstration sites for alfalfa varieties will be showcased in the southwest, including the Waldeck site located near Swift Current and established in 2006 with 10 varieties, and the Consul Irrigation District, which is another alfalfa variety site seeded this spring with 15 varieties. The **Waldeck Field Day** is scheduled for **July 4**, beginning at 1:30 p.m.
- A newer higher-value brand of non-darkening pinto bean is the focus of an ICDC demonstration this summer. A **Bean Field Day**

on **Aug. 8 in Outlook** will feature the new "White Mountain" brand of dry beans from Walker Seeds and KEG Agro, and includes a tour of Outlook dry bean variety trials.

- A **southwest crop survey** will be undertaken this summer and is targeted at delivering R&D needs evaluation.
- A **grass and alfalfa variety trial** at Osler continues to provide yield and quality data. This site demonstrates intensively-managed forage for dairy utilization in the dairy region north of Saskatoon.
- Four **corn variety demonstrations** are to be held throughout the province. Information containing late summer or fall events will be posted on ICDC's website at www.irrigationsaskatchewan.com.
- Two **irrigated pasture demonstrations** that focus on intensive-management grazing, daily gains, stocking rates and economic feasibility will be held periodically throughout the grazing season.
- Four **AC Andrew ethanol wheat production demonstrations** will be held in conjunction with Terra Grains and Gardiner Dam Terminal as industry partners. Planning is underway for field tours in the **Baldon and Birsay** areas.



- The ICDC fruit industry facilitation project seeks to advance commercialization, processing and marketing of this exciting crop. The **Outlook Fruit Tour on July 31** will include demonstrations of a harvester and other equipment, irrigation solutions for orchards, rejuvenation, and a variety of fruit types.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Call the ICDC office at 1-306-867-5500; or
- Visit the ICDC's website at www.irrigationsaskatchewan.com for additional information on ICDC-funded projects and related field events.





DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	PHONE	EMAIL / WEBSITE
July 4	Camelina & Special Crop Plot Tour / Info Session	AAFC Research Station, Swift Current	306-787-4665	
July 5	Conservation Learning Centre Field Day	Prince Albert	306-953-2362	
July 5	SCIC: Deadline to report seeded greenfeed acres	Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
July 11	Western Applied Research Corporation Field Day	Scott Research Farm, Scott	306-247-2011	
July 11	Summerfallow coverage must be met and maintained	Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
July 11	Summerfallow coverage for green manure crops in brown & dark brown soil zones must be maintained	Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
July 12	Irrigation Field Day	Can-Sask Irrigation Diversification Centre, Outlook	306-867-5402	
July 12	Wheatland Conservation Area Field Day	Swift Current	306-778-7289	
July 15	Deadline for the Organic Reseeding Benefit	Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
July 17	Indian Head Crop Management Field Day	IHARF, Indian Head	306-695-4200	http://paridys.usask.ca/specialcrop/spoke/indian_head/events.htm
July 18	Canaryseed Research Plot Tour	Indian Head	306-787-4665	
July 18	Melfort Research Farm Field Day	Melfort	306-752-2776	
July 19	East Central Research Foundation Field Day	Canora	306-563-5551	
July 20	South East Research Farm (Info Session with researchers, producers and agrologists)	Redvers	306-452-3161	
July 25	Summerfallow coverage for green manure crops in black & gray soil zones must be met & maintained	Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com
Aug. 10 - 12	Yorkton Cowboy Festival	Yorkton Exhibition Grounds, Yorkton	306-782-2108	www.yorktoncowboyfestival.com
Aug. 20 - 25	Royal Red Arabian Horse Show	IPSCO Place, Regina	306-696-4542	www.saskhorse.ca/pages/events.php
August 25	Winterkill coverage deadline on fall rye & winterwheat	Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation	1-888-935-0000	www.saskcropinsurance.com

SHOWCASING SASKATCHEWAN TO THE WORLD

By Ron Monette

Agri-Business Development Specialist, SAF

The Economic Developers Association of Canada (EDAC) National Conference will be held September 15 to 18, 2007 in Saskatoon. Conference streams include:

- Cultural Diversity;
- Progressive Regional Economies; and
- Technology, Innovation and Industry.

At the EDAC Conference, you will hear about innovative partnerships and collaborations. You will learn how international competition is driving innovative new products, services and greater productivity. And you will learn how communities and regions are taking innovative steps to build their future.

Local, national and international speakers will talk about working together in a culturally diverse nation to create the leadership, dynamic regions, products, services, and wealth needed to sustain Canada's envied standard of living. The conference will explore Canada's place within the global marketplace and discuss trends and issues affecting our ability to compete today and in the future.



KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

PAMELA WALLIN

Ms. Wallin, a Canadian-born journalist, diplomat and entrepreneur, will deliver a keynote address entitled "Canada - A Kaleidoscope of Peoples, Cultures and Opportunity."

Wallin will open the conference with a presentation that supports the underlying theme of EDAC - the idea that national values, dreams, and pride are woven into almost every sector and region of our economy. The mosaic of people impacts our security, our immigration efforts, and how we interact in the global economy.

DR. PATRICK MOORE

Dr. Moore, environmental consultant and founding member of Greenpeace, will provide a keynote address entitled "Energy, the

Environment and Canadian Manufacturing Competitiveness."

Moore, a leader in the international environmental field for over 30 years, explores the issue surrounding the impact that limited natural resources and the increased competitiveness for these resources is having on Canada, and whether we can develop and maintain competitive economies.

DR. MARK PARTRIDGE

Dr. Partridge is an Adjunct Professor and the past Canadian Research Chair in the New Rural Economy at the University of Saskatchewan. Professor Partridge has published more than 60 academic papers on broad economic and demographic trends. His work has been ranked among the top economists in the world. He is currently the lead investigator on an Infrastructure Canada grant to examine rural-urban interactions and the role of infrastructure.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

- Visit www.edac.ca for regular updates, more information, and to register online; or
- Contact Ryan Bater, EDAC 2007 Conference Co-Chair, at 306-446-7506; or
- E-mail rbater@battlefordsreda.com.

Saskatchewan!